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TAGS: [PREL](#) [OTRA](#) [ASEC](#) [AADP](#) [NATO](#) [OSCE](#) [PARM](#)
SUBJECT: WELCOME HLTF MARCH 21-23, 2007 TO NATO

REF: STATE 032564

¶1. Mission welcomes Karin Look, Larry Schultz, Jennifer Laurendeau, Sharon White, Jeffrey Gibbs, James Starkey, Christopher Beecroft, Powell Moore, and Stephen Olejasz to USNATO for HLTF meetings March 21-23. Control Officer for the visit is USNATO Political Officer is Don Sheehan. Office: (32)2-724-3486 fax: (32)2-724-3421. Administrative support is provided by Lucia Krul (32)2-724-3233.

¶2. Hotel reservations have been confirmed at the Sheraton Hotel, Place Rogier, Tel: 32 2 224 3111. Karin Look #206210352 March 21-23; Larry Schultz #216210352 March 21-30; Jennifer Laurendeau #266210352 March 21-23; Sharon White #376210352 March 21-23; Jeffrey Gibbs #226210352 March 21-23; James Starkey #636210234 March 18-23; Christopher Beecroft #316210352 March 21-23; Powell Moore Confirmed(DOD) March 21-23, and Stephen Olejasz #176210327 March 21-23.

¶3. Transportation van will be available at the Brussels International Airport at 0630 in anticipation of United Flight 0950, Wednesday March 21. The van will escort DAS Look and visitors to the Sheraton Hotel, and to USNATO at a designated time. However, the primary mode of transportation for visitors to Brussels is metered taxis, which are plentiful. Please keep in mind fares, which can be vouchered, are quite expensive. The bus, tram, and metro are excellent.

¶4. NATO visitor passes have been arranged for meeting participants and can be picked up at NATO's main gate entrance between 0800-1700. After 1700 passes are available for pick up at the main reception desk. Visitors should then proceed directly to the U.S. Mission, near the NATO "F-wing" entrance. For security reasons, all visitors, even those with green NATO badges, must present two pieces of identification or their blue State Department-issued badge to the Marine Guard before being admitted into the U.S. Mission. Visitors must also leave cell phones and other electronic equipment with the Marine Guard. Mission appreciates your cooperation.

¶5. Computer and Electronics Usage: Inter-agency security standards prohibit the introduction or use of non-USG owned computer hardware and software at all USG diplomatic facilities. Cell phones, palm pilots, radios and other convenience electronics are prohibited in all secure areas of the Mission. Travelers who anticipate having special needs in terms of either access or computer usage should contact the RSO office before arriving at post.

¶6. Regarding money, there is a branch of the ING Bank at NATO which has an ATM that accepts U.S. bank/credit union cards on the "PLUS" system. Numerous downtown banks also have ATM machines. Traveler's checks can be exchanged in most banks. On Tuesday and Thursday mornings, there is a cashier at USNATO to which TDY visitors with travel orders have access.

¶7. Threat Assessment: A worldwide caution regarding the threat of transnational terrorism was issued by the Department of State. (Please consult the Department's website for text: [HTTP:HTravel.State.Gov](http://HTravel.State.Gov).) In light of this caution and the events of September 11, 2001, all visitors are encouraged to assess their security posture, and be alert to their surroundings. All visitors should exercise caution while traveling abroad as U.S. citizens and facilities are often the target of groups demonstrating opposition to the U.S. foreign policy.

¶8. Belgium remains a relatively safe country but as a result of the war in Iraq, and sentiments expressed by its citizens against the war, American visitors are advised to exercise caution and avoid anti-American demonstrations. Also, it is prudent not to wear clothes or carry articles with logos and emblems associated with the United States at this time. By taking reasonable precautions, visitors should enjoy an uneventful stay. However, purse snatching and pick-pocketing are occurring more frequently. In Brussels, pick-pocketing and purse snatching are more prevalent in the metro system (subway, bus, tram) and at Brussels' three major train stations: Gare du Nord (North Station), Gare Central (Central Station), and especially Gare du Midi (South Station). Extra caution should be used at the Gare Centrale Station. Victims have been asked for assistance by someone who appeared lost and anxious to catch their train. As the victim responds to the request, a third person appears and steals laptop computers, and other related travel items. According to the police, this is a new strategy by criminal gangs operating at Central Station. Apparently they prefer platforms 3 and 4, used by trains going to the airport and obviously carrying the best category of potential victims. Valuables should never be left unattended in vehicles and car doors should always be kept locked when driving. Carry only a minimum amount of cash, credit cards and ID. Expensive jewelry, financial records, address books and other personal effects should be left at home or stored in a safe place during your visit.

¶9. Emergency numbers for the Police and Medical Assistance are 101 and 100 respectively, and for cellular phones (locally) 112. Visitors to Belgium requiring additional information should contact the Brussels Regional Security Office at 32-2-508-2370 (if dialing locally, 02-508-2370).

¶10. Please advise if further assistance is needed.

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